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FM AMCONSUL MUNICH
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4280
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MUNICH 000061

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STATE FOR EUR EUR/AGS, SECDEF FOR OSD RICHARD DOTSON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/11/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [PARM](#) [MARR](#) [GM](#) [UP](#)

SUBJECT: A/S FRIED'S MEETING WITH UKRAINIAN DEFENSE
MINISTER YEKHANUROV

REF: MUNICH 52

Classified By: Consul General Eric G. Nelson for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)
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11. (C) Summary: A/S Fried discussed Ukraine's NATO aspirations with Defense Minister Yekhanurov February 9, in particular Ukraine's interest in a NATO offer of a Membership Action Plan (MAP) at the April Bucharest Summit. Fried highlighted the challenge of getting NATO agreement on MAP, given the time remaining and the lateness of the Ukrainian request. Nevertheless, while making clear that the U.S. had made no final decision, the U.S. took this challenge seriously and hoped that all of Ukraine's leaders did so as well. Yekhanurov stressed the importance MAP would have in shaping Ukraine's reforms for many years to come and expressed confidence that even the opposition "Regions" party might go along with MAP. The two also discussed Georgia and helicopters for UNAMID in Darfur. End Summary.

12. (U) A/S Fried met with Ukrainian Defense Minister Yuri Yekhanurov on the margins of the Munich Security Conference. Yekhanurov was accompanied by advisor Viktor Korendovych and an interpreter. Notetaker was Embassy Berlin Minister-Counselor Jeff Rathke.

13. (C) A/S Fried outlined his recent discussions with Ukrainian leaders on the "Letter of the Three" requesting a MAP at the Bucharest NATO Summit. The USG needed to understand how much support there was in Ukraine for joining the Membership Action Plan. President Yushchenko had been a strong advocate for a MAP during his Davos meeting with Secretary Rice. Prime Minister Tymoshenko seemed less

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committed. She had been scheduled to address the Munich Security Conference as a keynote speaker, but had withdrawn the week of the conference. This was a major missed opportunity. The U.S., Fried continued, supported Ukraine's aspirations, but the United States could not want NATO for Ukraine more than Ukraine itself did. In that light, Fried asked Yekhanurov where Ukraine stood.

14. (C) Yekhanurov said Ukraine needed extensive reforms, while acknowledging that Tymoshenko was reluctant to pursue

them because she wanted to maintain her popular support. Tymoshenko's attitude toward NATO mirrored that of the public, which did not understand NATO or widely support membership. But opinion could change. President Yushchenko's power had increased, as well, and Tymoshenko had agreed to sign the "Letter of the Three." Despite the evolving state of Ukrainian opinion, this was an important historical development.

15. (C) MAP would be difficult to achieve, Yekhanurov admitted, but he argued it would be an extremely important milestone that would consolidate Ukraine around Euro-Atlantic integration. MAP would help consolidate Ukrainian opinion in a pro-Western direction. He said this was the position of President Yushchenko, who wanted to "formalize" these tendencies to make them more sustainable. Recalling his work with Yushchenko in 2001 to develop Ukraine's IMF program, Yekhanurov pointed out that subsequent governments were forced to abide by it. In other words, Ukraine would stay on the NATO track once it had MAP, regardless of the complexion of subsequent governments.

16. (C) Yekhanurov said Ukraine would continue the reforms envisioned by MAP, even if Kyiv is not formally invited into MAP by NATO at Bucharest, but these reforms would proceed more slowly if Ukraine were outside MAP. Even "Regions" party leader Yanukovych would not reverse them. Fried asked about "Regions," unhelpful behavior, in the Rada and on the streets, against NATO. Yekhanurov responded that he had been told by a Regions official (NFI) that Regions could go along with a resolution in the Rada that supported MAP, as long as it underscored the need for a referendum in advance of actually joining NATO. Yekhanurov dismissed some of Regions' public antics as theater: "If it were not MAP, they would complain about the president's hairstyle." Once Regions, and

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key leaders like Akhmetov and Kluyev, felt sure of their political security, progress might be possible.

17. (C) MAP for Ukraine would generate strong objections and perhaps retaliation by Russia, Fried noted, and asked whether Ukraine was ready for the consequences. Yekhanurov responded that there were historical moments in which much must be risked. Ukraine, he stressed, was prepared for the hard road to NATO. Fried responded that the senior leadership of the USG was considering the issue. Whatever happened at Bucharest, he stressed, Ukraine should be seen as having advanced its road to draw close to Europe and the transatlantic community. It was important that no outcome at Bucharest be seen as a failure. The U.S. wanted to see Ukraine's road to NATO as open as possible, if that is what Ukraine desired.

Georgia, UNAMID Helicopters

18. (C) Yekhanurov asked about Georgia, and Fried said the Georgian parliamentary election needed to be better than the presidential election. Georgia needed a normal parliamentary opposition, rather than a one-party system with a charismatic leader at the top.

19. (C) Yekhanurov raised the request for helicopter support to UNAMID, and said he needed time to pursue the matter. There were three options for cargo/utility helicopters: those belonging to the MOD and Armed Forces, those belonging to state-owned enterprises controlled by the MOD, and those in private hands (the "Ukrainian Helicopter" firm). He downplayed the possibility of combat helicopters, since their deployment outside Ukraine would require an act of the Rada.

110. (U) A/S Fried has cleared this cable, which also was coordinated with Embassy Berlin.
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